



# Hendry County Sheriff's Office

## General Order 20.10

<b>TITLE:</b> Telecommunications	<b>SHERIFF'S APPROVAL:</b> Digital
<b>ORIGINATION DATE:</b> August 4, 2018	<b>REVISION DATE:</b> May 27, 2019
<b>RELATED REFERENCES:</b> §119.07, F.S., §365.171, F.S., §401.465, F.S., 934.03(2)(g)2, F.S. <b>CFA:</b> 25.01M, 26.02, 25.03M, 25.04M, 25.05M, 25.06M, 25.07, 25.09M, 25.10M, 25.11M, 25.12M, 25.13M, 25.14M, 25.15M, 25.16, and 25.17	
<b>REVIEW FREQUENCY:</b> 3 YEARS	<b>DATE OF NEXT REVIEW:</b> May 27, 2022

**I. PURPOSE:** The purpose of this order is to provide an overview of the responsibilities / functions of Telecommunications.

**II. SCOPE:** This order shall apply to all sheriffs' office members.

**III. POLICY:** All agency personnel will courteously receive and disseminate information as necessary to promote the mission of the Hendry County Sheriff's Office.

The Hendry County Sheriff's Office will provide reasonable assistance to persons with limited English proficiency (LEP) to ensure timely and equal access to all individuals regardless of national origin or primary language. LEP individuals may elect to accept agency-provided interpreter services of bilingual Sheriff's Office employees or a language translation service, or may choose to provide their own interpreter service at their own expense. If the individual chooses agency-provided services, the Telecommunications Center will coordinate contacting the interpreter or the language translation service. Agency personnel will document in any associated case report the use of an interpreter's service or a language translation service.

## IV. PROCEDURE:

### A. Telecommunications Center

1. The Telecommunications Center is a support unit of law enforcement operations. The Telecommunications Center is responsible for the agency's radio communications functions and the Emergency 911 and non-emergency lines.
2. The Telecommunications Center has complete access to local, state, and federal information systems. All employees who utilize these systems are to comply with FCIC/NCIC regulations. The Telecommunications Center utilizes numerous radio frequencies licensed by the Federal

Communications Commission (FCC). These frequencies are provided and controlled by the Hendry County 800 MHz Radio Administration, a division of Hendry County Emergency Management.

3. All operational aspects are to be in accordance with FCC procedures and requirements. The Telecommunications Center maintains 24-hour access to all county inter-jurisdictional radio systems. This inter-jurisdictional radio is used for:
    - a. Communication Center employees to communicate with deputies and other law enforcement agencies.
    - b. Communications during inter-jurisdictional operations and unusual occurrences.
    - c. Communications between on-duty deputies and on-duty officers from other local agencies.
    - d. Expediting law enforcement service to the public.
  4. The Telecommunications Center is a limited access facility for authorized personnel and is controlled 24 hours daily by either employees or electronic security access. Closed Circuit Television (CCT) cameras monitor the interior and exterior entrances.
  5. All power lines, transmission cables, and equipment vital to both radio and telephonic communications are below ground or have secondary back-up systems. An emergency generator system is in place and is capable of producing adequate power for an indefinite time period.
    - a. The emergency generator is under the control of Hendry County Facilities, who maintains and services the unit. Monthly manual logs indicating service, routine maintenance, and monthly functionality tests are kept by Hendry County Facilities and are reviewed monthly by Telecommunications supervision to ensure the monthly schedule is maintained.
    - b. All antennas, towers and ancillary equipment are controlled by the Hendry County 800 MHz Radio Administration. All sites are secured by fences and have an emergency source of backup power.
    - c. The Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system is designed using “peer to peer” architecture. In the event of a server failure, the system assigns a CAD workstation in the group to take over server operations with limited connectivity. In the event of a catastrophic failure of the system, or the need to evacuate the premises, backup CAD laptops are employed to continue limited dispatch abilities from a remote site.
- B. Agency employees are to check in with the on-duty supervisor and identify themselves when entering the Telecommunications Center. To obtain after-hours access, use the security telephone located at the main entrance of the Telecommunications Center.
- C. Visitors are allowed in the Telecommunications Center but are required to make prior arrangements with Telecommunications supervisor. Approved requests can be rescinded based on operational needs. Any visitor who is not a Sheriff’s Office employee has to sign in and show photo identification. All visitors are to be with a Telecommunications employee escort.
- D. The Hendry County Sheriff’s Office non-emergency telephone numbers are posted on the public website. Use these numbers when a specific agency component telephone number is not known or applicable. All calls received on the Emergency 911 lines that are not emergency in nature get re-routed to these non-emergency lines.

1. Answer these lines with “Hendry County Sheriff’s Office” followed by the officer’s name.
- E. The Hendry County Sheriff’s Office maintains a toll free enhanced 911 system for emergency calls, 24 hours a day.
  1. Answer these emergency lines with “911, where is your emergency?”
  2. Telecommunications employees trained on Emergency Medical Dispatcher (EMD) will provide first aid and medical emergency guidelines over the phone or radio.
  3. All 911 hang ups will be called back or dispatched out.
- F. All calls received on Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD)/ Text Telephone(s) (TTY) will be handled in the same manner as any emergency/non-emergency call.
  1. Telecommunications Center will relay all information to a qualified interpreter for a deaf and hearing impaired individuals
- G. Call priority relational data
  1. The CAD system automatically assigns the priority to calls based on the call type determined by the call intake operator.
- H. Escalation is optional at the complaint intake level.
  1. Priority 1: Immediate response, indicating the presence of one or more of the following: (requires notification and response of the patrol supervisor) and may require an emergency response (10-18).
    - a. All In-Progress crimes
    - b. Possible life-threatening situations
    - c. Possible violent acts
  2. Priority 2: Indicates one or more of the following: (requires notification of the patrol supervisor) and may require an emergency response (10-18).
    - a. All calls which have just occurred
    - b. Possible escalation to violent or life-threatening situation
    - c. Possibility that suspect(s) are still in the vicinity
  3. Priority 3: Is considered a call for service with potential Threat. The deputy response is a normal, non-emergency response to the call.
  4. Priority 4: Is considered a call for service with no known life threatening situation, violent act, or no known suspect in the vicinity. The deputy response is a normal, non-emergency response to the call.
  5. Priority 5: Calls that are supplemental in nature to another call for service or that do not require a response.

- I. All calls for service, including self-initiated deputy activity, is entered into the CAD, which automatically assigns the event and case numbers, date and time of the request, and the identity of the complaint intake operator.
  1. The complaint intake operator in conjunction with the radio operator obtains/records, if available, the following information:
    - a. Type of incident reported
    - b. Location of incident
    - c. Time call received
    - d. Weapons
    - e. Name of the complainant
    - f. Location of complainant
    - g. Telephone number of the complainant
    - h. Details of the event
    - i. Description of suspect(s) and/or victim(s).
    - j. Time the call is dispatched
    - k. Time of primary and back-up deputy's arrival
    - l. Status and disposition/closure of the case
    - m. Time of call completion and deputy return to service
    - n. Identification of the primary and back-up deputies
  2. The deliberate recording of any misleading information related to the actual or perceived race, ethnicity, gender or sexual orientation of a person stopped for investigative or enforcement purposes is prohibited, and is a cause for disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.
  3. A case report number is assigned to all calls for service in the Sheriff's jurisdiction for, but not limited to, the following types of calls:
    - a. Citizen reports of crimes
    - b. Citizen complaints
    - c. Incidents resulting in a deputy or employee being dispatched or assigned
    - d. Criminal and non-criminal cases initiated by Sheriff's deputies or other employees
    - e. Incidents involving arrests, citations, or summonses

J. Complaint intake is the responsibility of the Telecommunications Center.

1. All requests for service receive a sequential case number.
2. The complaint intake operator determines assignment of call type or signal and priority, therefore it is crucial to obtain all pertinent information to accurately prioritize and relay the facts.
3. The Telecommunications supervisor may change or upgrade the complaint type or priority.
4. Changes to the call type or signal made by law enforcement employees supersede the determination of the complaint intake operator.
5. Multiple calls for the same event do not require additional/separate case numbers.
6. If necessary, original events can be modified or updated.
7. Additional or supplemental calls are linked or referred to the original event.
8. The complaint intake officer judges the characteristics of the event to determine whether an emergency or non-emergency response is required.
  - a. This information is passed on to the responding deputy and the patrol supervisor.
  - b. Information regarding the agency's response, including direct law enforcement service and/or referral to other agencies is provided to the reporting person.
  - c. Victims or complainants are referred to the proper agency or the HCSO Victim/Witness pamphlet.
  - d. All referrals are documented in the CAD comments of the call
9. Whenever possible, at least two units are notified to respond to calls that are determined to be "in-progress".
  - a. It is ultimately the patrol supervisor's responsibility to determine how many deputies are to respond to specific incidents and whether or not a supervisory response is required.
  - b. When special situations arise, such as disasters or tactical incidents, Telecommunication procedures are to be in conjunction with agency directives governing these special situations.
  - c. All requests for notification of other law enforcement agencies is accomplished by the Telecommunications Center. Deputies may contact other agencies to pass on information by using an intra-department radio talk-group. If a deputy conducts ongoing law enforcement business on an inter-jurisdictional channel, the Telecommunications Center is to be notified
10. Misrouted emergency and non-emergency calls are occasionally received. Telecommunications has the capability of transferring these calls directly to the appropriate agency or jurisdiction. Misrouted calls are processed in the following manner:
  - a. The call taker takes all available information and relays the information to the appropriate agency in the event the caller is unable to remain on the line.
  - b. The telephone system in Telecommunications is equipped to transfer emergency lines directly to any other agency or jurisdiction.

(1) One button transfer – Make choice and click appropriate agency.

- (2) Manual transfer – Type in “h”, then the phone number, and then enter; dial the number as you would dial a long distance number from your home (even if the number is a local number) “h, area code, number.” Dialing the 1 is not necessary.
- c. Additionally, inquiry forms are completed and forwarded to the agency head and county E911 coordinator.
11. When emergency messages are received for an on-duty employee the employee is contacted or the employee’s supervisor is advised. If the message is unable to be delivered, the originator is notified.
- a. Delivery of emergency messages to the public is limited to specific requests from other law enforcement agencies and from citizens when there is a question of a person’s safety or well-being or where there is a notification of serious illness, injury, or death.
- K. The Hendry County Sheriff’s Office responds to all reported residential and commercial alarms. All alarms, regardless of cancellation status requests, are dispatched to law enforcement employees who respond or clear the complaint at their discretion.
1. The Hendry County Sheriff’s Office does not monitor any residential or commercial alarm systems.
- L. Human Resource or designee assigns radio numbers.
1. Uniform patrol utilize radio numbers derived from shift and zone.
2. Command staff, deputy sheriff’s working assignments other than uniform patrol, and other employees designated by the Sheriff are assigned an individual radio number. These numbers are utilized as long as the individual holds that specific assignment.
3. The Telecommunications Center CAD system tracks the activities of all deputies by ID number.
- M. Employees are required to exhibit professionalism at all times on the radio frequencies licensed to the Sheriff’s Office and on the frequencies of other entities that employees are permitted to use.
1. All employees issued an 800 MHz agency radio to facilitate their duties will utilize the radio unless radio is inoperable, employees are to advise the Telecommunications Center (via radio, phone or mobile device) of the following, which is logged into the CAD system:
- a. In-service
- b. Out of service
- c. En route to a specific location (to a call, district, jail, etc.)
- d. Arrival/busy at location
- e. Clearing of a scene
- f. Stopping a vehicle
- g. Changes in their location or status while performing call for service duties

- h. Location or contact means when away from their assigned vehicle
      - i. Current location when being dispatched to a call for service
  - 2. Court Services employees are to contact their respective CSC for in-service and out of service status but are required to contact Telecommunications when operating an agency vehicle or requesting case report numbers.
  - 3. CAD system is setup to allow Telecommunications to verify member's status after a specified elapsed time without contact.
  - 4. Employees on or responding to a call for service, the supervisor in the affected area, or the Telecommunications Center may initiate emergency radio traffic.
    - a. When emergency radio traffic is initiated, the Telecommunications Center activates an alert tone for approximately three (3) seconds and then provides the unit radio number and location, then re-broadcasts the event type.
    - b. Units not involved in the emergency situation are instructed to transfer all radio traffic to an alternative radio group.
    - c. Only those units involved in the emergency situation are to request cancellation of emergency radio traffic.
  - 5. Telecommunications employees notify first responder medical/fire, public utilities, department of transportation, and other resources based on the circumstances of the call received. The patrol supervisor and responding deputy are apprised of such notifications. Notifications to the Medical Examiner's Office, Department of Children and Families, and other agencies are done with supervisory approval.
  - 6. The Telecommunication Supervisor on duty is responsible for ensuring a relief period for Telecommunications personnel involved in emergency and high stress situations. This may involve obtaining additional resources or assistance.
- N. All Hendry County Sheriff's Office radios are equipped with an emergency signal transmit button.
- 1. Emergency button activations display on the currently selected talk group.
  - 2. The display reflects the assigned Logical Identification number (LID).
  - 3. The Telecommunications Officer ascertains to whom the logical belongs by checking the LID Number. The Telecommunications Officer attempts to check the status of the unit asking for their 10-13 (well-being).
  - 4. If the unit does not respond, emergency radio traffic is declared on the talk group of the activation and alternative methods to communicate with the unit are attempted.
  - 5. Back-up units are instructed to respond to the location of the activation (if known).
  - 6. Cancellation of the activation occurs when the initiating person provides the proper cancellation information, or when a supervisor determines that the emergency traffic can be cleared.
- O. The Telecommunications supervisor or designee authorizes radio talk groups for special events.

1. The Telecommunications Supervisor or designee issues a countywide BOLO designating the use of mutual aid groups for special events.
- P. General Radio Traffic Handling Procedure:
  1. Units calling Telecommunications utilize their assigned radio number and suffix the transmission with “Labelle or Clewiston”.
  2. The Telecommunications Center prefixes their transmissions with “Labelle or Clewiston” and addresses the unit’s assigned radio number.
  3. The Telecommunicator will use a moderate pace while relaying organized information on the radio. This will help guarantee that all necessary information is received with minimum wasted effort.
  4. The Telecommunications Center notifies the patrol supervisor whenever there are calls for service that are holding.
  5. The Telecommunications Center conducts routine status checks (“10-13”) upon activation of the unit timer(s) on calls for service. If the unit does not respond, the Telecommunications Officer:
    - a. Contacts the unit with a “10-13” check. If you cannot contact the unit by radio, attempt to contact by phone.
    - b. Dispatch another unit for “10-94” (back-up) until the unit acknowledges the contact.
    - c. Field personnel (*those having routine contact with the general public while not in a traditional office setting*) that have not been heard from for a two-hour period are contacted for a status check.
  6. The Telecommunications Center documents all pertinent radio transmissions or changes in status. All operational radio and telephonic signals (incoming and outgoing) are recorded upon master recording media and held for ninety (90) days.
    - a. All radio and telephonic signals received at operational workstations are recorded on rapid-playback equipment.
    - b. Radio and telephone recordings are essential for criminal investigations, internal investigations, evidence and Telecommunications training. Portions of these recordings are also public record and are provided to the public pursuant to Florida Statute 119.07. Florida Statute 365.171 exempts certain information from disclosure.
      - (1) All requests for copies of radio, telephonic, and/or computerized information by persons other than those employed by the Hendry County Sheriff’s Office are referred to the Records Unit. Once the Records Unit receives the request it is processed and redacted, if necessary, according to Public Records Law and then made available to the requestor through the Records Unit. The Sheriff’s Office provides the public with information contained on the logging recorder and ensures the recording is released in compliance with statutes relating to confidentiality and exemptions.
      - c. All requests for radio, telephonic, and/or computerized information by HCSO employees is made by email, approved by the employee’s supervisor and sent to the Telecommunications supervisor. The Telecommunications Supervisor or designee processes requests made by agency employees.

- (1) Only designated Telecommunications, Records and Civil Process employees have the authority to research and copy information contained in the recording system.
- d. The Communications Supervisor or designee has exclusive access to stop or change recorded media.
  - (1) The security measures include but are not limited to log-on procedures and password procedures.
- e. The master recording system is handled by Information Technology (IT) and is located within a secure location inside of the Port Labelle Annex. All current or archival recording tapes are stored in a secure limited access area in the Telecommunications Center.

Q. Communications employees have immediate access to at least the following agency resources:

- 1. Officer in charge
- 2. Duty roster of all employees
- 3. Residential telephone number and address of every agency employee
- 4. Telephone numbers of emergency service agencies
- 5. Visual maps detailing the agency's service area
- 6. Officer status indicators
- 7. Procedures and telephone numbers for procuring emergency and necessary external services are located in the telecommunications center. The telephone numbers are preprogrammed into the telephone system at each console. External services include:
  - a. Aircraft
  - b. Ambulances
  - c. Environmental and human services
  - d. Fire suppression
  - e. Federal Bureau of Investigation
  - f. Media
  - g. Wreckers and Taxis
  - h. Other services which are not a component of the agency (i.e., Animal Control, Poison Control, FDOT and FHP, County Road & Bridge, etc.)

R. Call out procedures/schedules and dispatching plans

- 1. Telecommunicators have a responsibility to inform colleagues and supervisors of incidents that may affect operations to include:

- a. The need to relay knowledge of what is transpiring in the Center so others are aware of the situation and can assist or take appropriate action;
- b. High priority incidents, news worthy events, public safety concerns and anything that will impact how incidents are handled;
- c. Relay of information that is important for responder and public safety;
- d. Supervisors responsibilities in obtaining additional resources or assistance and ensuring a relief period for telecommunicators during high stress situations; and
- e. Supervisor's responsibility to ensure appropriate action is taken for public records purposes and news releases.

S. Telecommunicator Responsibilities:

- 1. Telecommunicators have a responsibility to quickly and accurately complete all forms, logs, records, and file systems
- 2. Official records must be accurately and rapidly completed without assistance
- 3. Incident records must be completed with detailed and correct remarks and updated information as necessary
- 4. Records must be free of spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors
- 5. Documentation should be in chronological order and provide a timeline of events
- 6. Plain English should be used, with limited use of acronyms or non-standard abbreviations. Industry jargon must be avoided
- 7. Document only what the caller says; not opinions about the conversation
- 8. To speak clearly and distinctly at all times. Along with this, the ability to reduce rambling and disconnected information into concise and accurate messages.

T. Investigation of Domestic Violence Cases

- 1. Telecommunications employees can assist in the prosecution of domestic violence cases by obtaining valuable information at the time of the call for service. The operator is never to ask if the victim wishes to prosecute. Copies of all tapes and other computer-generated evidence are stored by the Telecommunications Center in keeping with current operational standards and are made evidence with the request of proper supervisory authority.

U. Voluntary Missing Persons/Voluntary Missing Children

- 1. Duties and responsibilities of call taker/dispatcher:
  - a. Obtain the basic facts as to who, what, when, where, and how, including a brief description of the victim and any vehicles involved.
  - b. Search CAD for any previous contact with the complainant and victim, any similar activities, and any police activity within the reported or adjacent area or at the complainant's and victim's address. Advise responding units of any pertinent information.

- c. Broadcast all critical details to other patrols or precincts within the Sheriff's Office. Notify local and state agencies. Consider FCIC for regional and state broadcast. Maintain sensitivity to the media's ability to monitor these transmissions and use appropriate discretion relative to specific crime scene details.

## V. Bomb Threats

- 1. When a bomb threat call is received, the call taker:
  - a. Ascertains, as accurately as possible, the following:
    - (1) When is the bomb going to explode?
    - (2) Where is it right now?
    - (3) What does it look like?
    - (4) What kind of bomb is it?
    - (5) What will cause it to explode?
    - (6) Did you place the bomb?
    - (7) Why?
    - (8) What is your address?
    - (9) What is your name?
  - b. Attempts to record the exact wording of the threat and attempt to ascertain from the caller or by voice characteristics:
    - (1) The gender of the caller
    - (2) Race
    - (3) Age
    - (4) The length of the call
    - (5) The phone number to which the call came
    - (6) The time the call was received
    - (7) The date
    - (8) Background noise
  - c. Immediately trace the call when the call has been disconnected.
  - d. Immediately notifies the patrol supervisor and the zone deputy.

## W. Training

1. All Telecommunications Center employees will complete the Telecommunication FTO Manual.
  2. All Telecommunications Center employees are trained in the operation of the Telecommunications Device for the Hearing Impaired (also known as the TDD machine). In addition, all Telecommunications Center employees are trained to recognize the characteristics of persons whose disabilities may require special Telecommunications techniques and methods of providing service. Employees are to become familiar with techniques to give support to individuals with disabilities.
  3. All Telecommunications Center employees are trained in Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD).
  4. APCO EMD requires 24 hours of training for the biennial renewal certification.
  5. 911 Public Safety Telecommunicator Training
    - a. All 911 Public Safety Telecommunicators are required to be certified/recertified through the Department of Health (DOH) in accordance with FS 401.465.
    - b. The Sheriff's Office has a 911 Public Safety Telecommunicator training program that has a DOH approved curriculum and ensures that instruction is provided by individuals who are 911 Public Safety Telecommunicator certified by the DOH. The trainee must complete 232 hours in the DOH training program before they are eligible to take the state test.
  6. Telecommunicator trainees are required to work under the direct supervision of a certified 911 Public Safety Telecommunicator during their approved training program and until they receive certification as specified in FS 401.465. The trainee must achieve certification within 12 months of hire into the trainee position.
  7. DOH requires 20 hours of training for the biennial renewal certification.
  8. Random calls are reviewed quarterly for quality assurance purposes.
    - a. Each quarter every Telecommunications officer will have two (2) random phone calls and two (2) random radio calls for service evaluated by the Telecommunications Supervisor or designee. Each set of calls will include one Priority 1 and one Priority 2 call. The results of the review will be discussed with the employee and documented. Additional training will be provided in any noted areas of deficiency.
  9. Remedial training is addressed in *General Order 18.1: Employee Development and Training*.
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## V. GLOSSARY:

**BOLO** – A broadcast over all primary talk groups or FCIC advising field employees to be on the lookout for described persons, objects, or events.

**BOLO AUTHORITY/RESPONSIBILITY** – Deputy or Telecommunications Officer requesting the issuance of a BOLO.

**CAD** – Computer Aided Dispatch system to record criminal and non-criminal requests for service.

**CASE REPORT NUMBER** – A sequential number predicated by the year, which is issued by the Sheriff's Office Telecommunications Center to identify and track calls for service requiring a case report.

**TELECOMMUNICATIONS OFFICER** – Employee of the Sheriff's Office, assigned to the Telecommunications Center, who processes incoming telephone calls, radio transmissions, and computerized information.

**EMERGENCY TRAFFIC** – Cessation of all radio traffic, except by employees responding to a specific emergency situation.

**CAD NUMBERS** – Numerically automated sequenced numbers that track all dispatch calls for service and officer activity.

**FCIC/NCIC** – Florida Crime Information Center and National Crime Information Center, respectively.

**TALKGROUP** – A designated radio group, designed for single or multi site utilization.

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